

From: [OMEALY Mikell](#)
To: (b) (6) pdxharborcag@lists.onenw.org
Subject: [pdxharborcag] Boat accident near Sauvie Island
Date: 05/17/2006 04:53 PM

Jim, Robin and CAG members,

At last Wednesday's CAG meeting, Jim raised a question about a boat accident that occurred during the May 6-7 weekend near Sauvie Island, and asked which agencies were responsible for responding to the incident. I checked with DEQ's Emergency Response team to learn more, and here is summary of what happened.

The boat was a 40 foot vessel that caught fire while it was being operated by one of its owners and basically burned to the ground and became beached on Sauvie Island. The US Coast Guard responded by bringing in NRC Environmental (a response contractor) to remove all of the fuels from the vessel. After fuels were removed and the wreckage was assessed, the Coast Guard declared that the vessel no longer posed a threat to the environment. With this assurance from the Coast Guard, DEQ's involvement in responding to incident ended (our statutes are specific to protecting the environment). Under applicable state and federal laws, the Coast Guard is not obligated nor are they funded to remove the wrecked vessel from the beach once environmental threats have been alleviated. Thus, the vessel is could remain on the beach until the county sheriff is able to force the owner to take responsibility for the incident and have it removed, or until the sheriff's office removes the boat itself. (I believe there was an article in last Friday's Portland Tribune that described the incident and indicated that the sheriff's office might remove the boat.)

Our knowledge about the boat owner is limited, but it's our understanding that the boat was owned by an estranged or divorced couple. She took the boat out and became intoxicated while driving it, then the vessel caught fire and she was arrested at the scene for DUI. The husband/ex-husband was located in Alaska after the Coast Guard had already federalized the fuel removal. We don't know the current status of the efforts to get the owners to remove the vessel, but if you'd like more information, I'd suggest contacting the Multnomah County Sheriff's office.

I hope that's helpful. If you'd like more information from DEQ on this, just let me know.

Thanks,
Mikell

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